

parent/student handbook

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

Dynamic Education Centered in Christ

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Dear Parents,

We are so blessed to have you and your child join our community in order to receive a dynamic education centered in Christ.

Saint Thomas is dynamic in that we tailor the education that we provide to each student's needs, whether with enrichment or with student support. We believe that each child is unique and therefore deserves a unique education. We are an inclusive community. Jesus tells us, "Whatsoever you do to the least of your brothers and sisters, you do unto me (Matthew 25)." We rise by lifting others.

We are dynamic in that we are innovative. Our teachers pride themselves in not just creating leaders, but being leaders in education. It is amazing to think that if you add up all of the faculty and staff it works out to a 7:1 ratio. That ratio means there are a lot of adults invested in your child's development of mind, body, and soul.

Everything we do, from morning chapel to our dismissal prayer centers on Christ. Lessons on virtues, the Catholic faith, and traditions permeate every lesson. Walking the hallways of Saint Thomas, students give witness to their faith journey. Our faith is showcased on the walls in the shape of crosses brought to us from all over the world and in the hearts of our students.

While parents are the primary educators of their children, we value the time that we have to walk alongside these future saints.

This handbook of information serves to familiarize you and your children with our school policies and operating procedures, as well as our Catholic response to matters of discipline. Faith is first, and in all things our faith guides our actions. The Code of Conduct is a reflection of Father Jim's teachings, our community beliefs, the diocesan statement on Human Dignity and our school mission. This document reflects our emphasis on the human person and the dignity of all students. These guiding tenants help us to ensure that Saint Thomas students "arise and shine" and to know God's love for them.

Blessings,

Ryan Corcoran

man

Principal

"Arise, Shine, for the glory of the Lord is upon you!" ~ Isaiah 60:1

Mission, Vision and Core Values

Fearless Faith

At Saint Thomas, we are faithful to the Catholic Church. Our faith is living and vibrant and permeates all we are and do. Each part of the school day is an active response to our faith:

- We pray consistently throughout every school day.
- We celebrate weekly Mass, prayer services and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- We weave the Catholic faith into every aspect of our curriculum, discipline and culture.

Rigorous Academics -- We lead the Diocese and the nation in supporting student achievement of individual goals.

From Pre-3 through 8th grade, our school is fully accredited, award winning, and led by highly qualified teachers who receive ongoing professional development and catechetical training. Our faculty and staff are dedicated to providing our students the best possible educational experience and opportunities. Using the latest teaching techniques, technology and best practices, we combine classroom and hands-on learning experiences so each child can succeed. Saint Thomas graduates are known in our community for their leadership and ability.

- We affirm the gifts of each student.
- We offer full-time Enrichment and Resource Services.
- We produce students who excel in high school, college and beyond.

Peaceful and Disciplined Climate – We believe the root of discipline is to "Disciple."

We provide a supportive and respectful environment. We promote a peaceful, positive and proactive approach to discipline. We teach our students to examine their words and actions in light of their faith and take responsibility to be what God created them to be.

- We set classroom expectations and student's code of conduct and enforce them from the first day of school.
- We embrace St. Paul's teaching, "Be devoted to one another...Honor one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10.
- We teach our children to stand up for what is right. As one Saint Thomas graduate explained, "I know that Saint Thomas has created a strong moral compass for me."

Empowered Parents -- We partner with our parents.

Parents are their children's first and primary teachers. We believe the more parents become involved in the educational process, the better their children will do. Parents are joint decision-makers and use their gifts to enhance our school. Our Volunteers in Partnership (VIP) Program

involves more than 200 parents, grandparents, parishioners and community members who volunteer their time and talents on committees or at events. We celebrate and welcome all gifts and talents!

- We welcome parents and want them to be in our school all day long.
- We are able to do more because of our volunteers' time, talents and gifts.
- We celebrate 95% parental involvement through a thriving VIP Program, Home & School, Parent Catechists, Athletics and Board of Education committees.

Intentional Technology -- We teach our students to use the latest technology and be morally responsible citizens in the Digital World.

Our students were born in a digital era. Their school life should reflect the world around them. Today's technology is a gift from God to help our students reach their full potential. At Saint Thomas, our students learn critical digital life skills and how to use them responsibly.

- We acquire technology as needed, under the guidance of a long range technology plan, updated yearly.
- We employ a full-time technology director and staff.
- We use technology to enhance our curriculum through the use of Smart boards in each classroom, campus-wide WIFI, iPads, Chrome books, Microsoft Surfaces, and a regularly updated computer lab.

Leadership Focus – We develop purposeful, powerful, and life-long servant leaders.

Leadership formation is at the heart of what we do. It involves educating the whole person and helping each student develop strong character. From preschool through 8th grade, Saint Thomas students learn to care for others, seek leadership opportunities and provide servant leadership to others. The Saint Thomas propriety student leadership model ensures that our 8th graders are prepared to assume their roles as leaders of our Saint Thomas school community and later, their future schools and communities.

- We are known for several of our leadership milestones, including the Leadership Retreat and Anointing Ceremony.
- We base our servant leadership model on the gospel message, "But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest and the leader as one who serves." Luke 22:26.
- We enhance our curriculum by providing daily leadership opportunities for all of our students, propelling them to become leaders in all aspects of their lives, such as Eagle Scouts and scholarship and award winners.

Admissions

Admission Policy

It is the intent of Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish that enrollment is open to all members of the community. In the event that an entry level classroom (preschool and kindergarten) is approaching the maximum student capacity, the children of parishioners maintain enrollment priority at entry levels and the children of parishioners and non-parishioners who are already attending Saint Thomas School in grades 1-8 retain the priority of their place.

Admissions Process

A new family seeking registration at Saint Thomas School initiates the admissions process by contacting the school, and introductory information is extended. The mission, beliefs, curricular and co-curricular programs are discussed with the parent and a tour of the school and/or classroom visitation is offered. For preschool and kindergarten, registration materials are provided. For grades 1-8, an Admissions Questionnaire must be completed by the parent for use by the school in determining if an appropriate placement can be made. Placement decisions will be made in consultation with parents, the child's previous school, and Saint Thomas teachers. Placement decisions will be made by the principal and communicated to the parents. When an appropriate placement is determined, registration forms are provided.

To begin school as a preschooler in either the three or four year old programs, the child must be three or four respectively by September 1. Exceptions may be made when class size allows. A physical examination, within a year prior to the first day of school is required, and all required immunizations are complete.

To begin school as a kindergartener, a child must be five (5) years old on or before the date specified by the State of Michigan Department of Education. A physical examination, within a year prior to the first day of school is required, and all required immunizations must be complete. The parents and teacher must agree that the child meets commonly held kindergarten readiness criteria.

Registration

A non-refundable fee is paid at the time of registration. Enrollment is not finalized until the fee is received and accepted by the parish office. When the number seeking enrollment is greater than the number of available openings, students will be admitted according to the following priorities:

- 1. Children of parishioners currently enrolled (P-8).
- 2. Children of parishioners seeking entry level enrollment (Preschool and Kindergarten).
- 3. Non-parishioner children currently enrolled (1-8).
- 4. Children of parishioners with siblings currently enrolled (1-8).
- 5. Non-parishioner children with siblings currently enrolled (1-8).
- 6. Children of parishioners seeking enrollment (1-8).
- 7. Other Catholic children from outside the parish.
- 8. Children from families of other religious faiths.

Please note that admission in the preschool programs does not automatically allow for admission to Saint Thomas School. Upon admission to kindergarten, admission to subsequent grades is automatic.

Because of the high level of difficulty involved in setting these priorities and in decision making when any classroom has reached capacity, the Pastoral Council and the Education Commission recommend the following:

- Clear yet open communication with families involved
- Self-resolution of conflicts by the families involved when all family members may not be admitted at once.
- Knowledge of opportunities for Catholic education beyond the doors of St. Thomas School that may be considered by the applicant family.

Code of Conduct

Christian Expectations ("Christian Heroics," Unpublished paper on role of Catholic Schools, #6, Father Jim Chelich)

As a Catholic School, Saint Thomas "works with and trains children of varying competencies, personalities, temperaments and levels of struggle to be living members of the Body of Christ—to be [a community of faith], the Church." To this end, we teach our children as Christians and Leaders to be the Hero in each moment by letting in the light and power of God's presence and grace.

Saint Thomas students:

- "Make room for one another;" accept everyone equally with friendliness and respect
- Interact with personalities or temperaments that are different than their own
- Lend support to the weakness of others
- Are grateful for the strengths in others
- Call one another to accountability ... in order to act as a group for the common good
- Respect rightful authority, school rules and the rights and property of others
- Understand that a "Christian is part of the problem if they do nothing to contribute to, encourage and support a solution."

Student and Staff Agreement

- All students, staff and volunteers have a right to personal safety and freedom to learn
- Each student, staff member and volunteer has his/her own purpose (or integrity) that should be allowed to thrive
- Saint Thomas the Apostle School prohibits any behaviors negatively impacting the school environment and/or an individual student, staff member or volunteer whether conducted in person or via an electronic device. Prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:
 - o Harming another's dignity
 - o Emotionally harming another

- o Physically harming another
- o Harming the school and/or community environment

It is noted that any one of the above acts may be equated to or an early stage of bullying. Saint Thomas strictly adheres to Diocesan guidelines as outlined below.

Grand Rapids Diocesan Student Dignity Statement (Diocese of Grand Rapids Office of Catholic Schools: Administration #2173 (Revised October 2012)

Any form of bullying, sexual harassment or racial harassment among students, employees and/or volunteers will not be tolerated.

- 1. Bullying or harassment includes any gesture that:
 - Is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress and includes any gesture or written, verbal, graphic or physical act, including cyber bullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed.
 - Interferes substantially with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more person.
 - Is based on a person's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic or on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.
- 2. Any sexual interaction between adults and students is expressly prohibited. Between adults, sexual harassment includes:
 - Making an unwelcome sexual advance, requesting sexual favors, or submitting any person to other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
 - Making submission to, or rejection of, such conduct the basis for decisions affecting any person.
 - Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, through such conduct.
- 3. Racial harassment includes:
 - Making negative references to a person's cultural or racial background.
 - Creating a hostile or offensive classroom environment through such conduct.

Saint Thomas the Apostle Corrective Approach

In light of Saint Thomas' formative mission, when situations arise the school's role is to:

- Professionally comfort and assist those targeted and/or reporting the incident
- Address immediately and communicate with all involved regarding behaviors that are 1.) disrespectful, 2.) dangerous, 3.) defiant or 4.) disruptive to any individual or the Saint Thomas mission including, but not limited to, those items articulated in Section H.
- Bring the students or others involved as necessary back into positive order—with God and others around them. See the Administrative Discipline Rubric.
- Use each disciplinary situation as an opportunity to disciple about positive Christian behavior

Furthermore, it is the obligation of the Saint Thomas Board of Education to ensure that:

 The Administration and Staff are trained in how to use appropriate rewards* and consequences to positively promote and encourage Christian responsibility, selfcontrol and self-esteem. (*Rewards are a natural outgrowth of positive living. To express appreciation for positive behavior at school, we make many attempts to recognize and reward students in many of the following ways: positive praise and feedback, stickers, bookmarks, awards, classroom parties, classroom auction, publishing names and pictures, extra recess times, positive parent phone calls, etc.

- School Administrators develop and implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses to a student or staff member who commits an act of misconduct, bullying and/or harassment.
- School Administrators develop an annual process for disseminating and discussing expected behaviors with students, parents and staff along with a statement explaining behaviors (virtual and face to face) prohibited from the school environment (classroom, playground, bus, school outings, etc.).

Statement on Technology

Today's world offers a complex web of human relationships. Many of these communications are face to face, but there are many ways we now interact. Students need to feel safe on and off campus, as what happens off campus extends into our school environment. Consequently, anyone who intimidates another and/or disrupts the school environment using electronic devices and/or social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is held to the same guidelines of conduct as those that are enforced on the school campus for face-to-face interactions.

Communication Procedure

Any staff member, student or volunteer who believes s/he has witnessed a matter of misconduct as described above shall report the instance to the Principal who will investigate all suspected incidents. All complaints of misconduct will be investigated promptly as the circumstances will allow. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The parents of involved students will be notified by the principal of the complaint as well as the results of the investigation. A written report summarizing the concern, the investigation, the determination and any corrective action will be maintained.

Misconduct which is believed to involve the Principal should be reported to the Parish Priest (School Superintendent). The Superintendent will conduct a prompt and appropriate investigation. If, following an investigation, the superintendent believes disciplinary action is warranted, then the superintendent will work with the Executive Committee of the Board of Education for on a disciplinary recommendation. A written summary of the complaint and subsequent action will be completed.

Misconduct which is believed to involve the Superintendent should be reported to the Executive Committee of the Board of Education. The President or designee will conduct a prompt and appropriate investigation following Diocesan guidelines and including Diocesan representatives. A written summary of the complaint and subsequent action will be completed.

Retaliation or False Reports

Retaliation against a person for reporting misconduct or for participating in an investigation of a report is prohibited and should be reported in the same manner as other misconduct.

Making intentionally false reports of misconduct is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Administrative Discipline Rubric

Injustice	Examples ¹	Discipline Process	Typical Discipline Actions
Another's Dignity	Teasing Mocking Name Calling Insulting Eye Rolling Gossiping Texting About	Own it Acknowledge those Impacted & Make it Right	 Principal Meeting Calling Home Name the Affected Verbal or Written Apology Call to parents of Affected students Service to Affected or appropriate party
		Restitution Own it	 Loss of Recess Silent Lunch Detention (Middle School) Meet with Parents 1 to 3 days suspension (in house or home depending on severity)
		Own It	

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¹ These behaviors in and of themselves may not warrant disciplinary action if done without negative intent.

Emotionally Harming Another's Worth	Eliminating from large group invitations "You can't play," Inappropriate use of technology Making someone stand out in a negative way Intimidation Targeted Exclusion, including "Unfriending" or "Blocking" Defiance Ignoring	Acknowledge those Impacted & Make it Right Restitution	• See above
Physically Harming Another	Punching Kicking Pushing Shoving Tripping Biting Grabbing Tackling Putting hand on another person Intentionally causing harm	Own it Acknowledge those Impacted & Make it Right Restitution	See above
Physically and Emotionally Harming Another	Attacks, Threats Harassment or Behavior that is intended to disturb based on: Race Ethnicity Sexuality Religion (Includes Inappropriate use of technology)	Own it Acknowledge those Impacted & Make it Right Restitution	• See above
Harm to the School and/or Community Environment	Graffiti Destruction of property Misuse of school materials,	Own it Acknowledge those Impacted & Make it Right	 Principal Meeting Calling Home Name the Affected

technology or equipment Intentionally making a mess Purposely causing work for another		 Verbal or Written Apology Call to parents of Affected students Service to Affected or appropriate party
	Restitution	 Service to school Monetary restitution Loss of Recess Silent Lunch Detention (Middle School) Meet with Parents 1 to 3 days suspension (in house or home depending on severity)

Protocol

Anytime a student is in the administrator's office for any reason, parents will be notified by a phone call from Principal, Assistant Principal or student.

- 1. Any adult or student observing above behaviors or hearing it from students will report this to their teacher, principal or assistant principal who will fill out an incident report.
- 2. The principal, assistant principal, or designee will investigate (if the behavior was reported by students and not seen by an adult) and identify the appropriate consequence on the rubric. The student and principal will call parent(s) at that time.
- 3. The above rubric is a guideline for appropriate consequences. The age of the student, the frequency of the behavior and the degree of seriousness will determine the approach taken with consequences.

Additional Consequences

Detentions	Special disciplinary sessions with either the student's teacher or principal. Specific work is assigned for the detention period. Notice will be given on the day of detention. Should it be necessary for the student to serve an after school detention, parent cooperation in arranging transportation will be necessary. If it is not possible for the parents to make appropriate arrangements, the detention may be served on the following day.	
In-Class Suspension	A teacher may remove a student from class to a place designated by the principal when grossness of the offense, the persistence of the misbehavior, or the disruptive effect of the violation make the continued presence of the student intolerable. Removal of a student from class is considered serious. The teacher and principal will contact the parents regarding the action.	
Full-Day In-House Suspension	The principal will call the student's parents to arrange the next possible day for In-House suspension. The student will be provided space at school and the principal will require a parent or relative to accompany that student for the day or reimburse the school 50% of the substitute teacher fee.	
Suspension	 Saint Thomas will not tolerate conduct that endangers the moral and/or physical well-being of the student body or staff, or conduct that is in open disregard for school authority. When suspension is the best recourse: The principal will contact the parents at time of suspension who will be required to come to school, meet with the principal and accept responsibility of their child for the duration of the suspension. The suspended student will be afforded the opportunity to state his/her account of the incident causing the suspension. Parents will receive in writing the criteria involving the out of school suspension. These criteria will include the specific reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension and/or conditions for its termination. 	

	4. The student will complete all assignments
	during the suspension, turning them into the
	principal or teacher upon his/her return.
Expulsion	Permanent exclusion of a student from school occurs
	when the principal judges that the pattern of
	misbehavior has been a consistent choice of the
	student involved and every reasonable opportunity
	has been granted for the student to change the
	appropriate behavior(s).
	Expulsion is rare and adequate warning will be given
	to the student and his/her parents.

Uniform Policy

At Saint Thomas, we believe that uniforms help to keep the focus on learning by providing students with age appropriate, modest attire suited to the learning and physical activity our students experience during a school day. Uniforms limit visual distractions. Uniforms from a single source help limit opportunities for economic discrimination by having all students wear the same range of uniform items from the same source. Additionally, uniforms promote a sense of belonging in our immediate school community and identify and promote our school when our students participate within our larger community.

- In school the current school year all items (excluding socks, tights, leggings and belts) must be My Aplus Uniform items.
- The school will continue to offer the service of a "uniform table." Uniform table items are available at school throughout the school year. During the final week of school, additional tables will uniforms will be set up in the first floor hallway. Any family may donate gently used uniform items in good repair. Likewise, any family may take items from the uniform table. There is no fee for taking uniform table items. If a family would like to make a contribution for uniform table items, please consider making a donation to the Saint Thomas the Apostle Education Foundation.
- If purchasing uniform items will present a hardship for a family, please contact the Principal or Assistant Principal for confidential assistance.
- All My Aplus uniform items can be viewed and purchased at the My Aplus Uniforms/St. Thomas website: https://lansing.myaplusuniforms.com/collections/st-thomas-the-apostle
- All new items must be the My Aplus Uniform brand.
- Logos are optional on the following items: white button down oxford shirts, white ³/₄ sleeve button down blouses, and white button down Peter Pan collar blouses.
- Please contact the school office with questions or concerns.

Uniform Code and Item Descriptions

General Rules

- Preschool students do not wear uniforms. Preschool students should follow the Uniform Holiday rules in selecting attire for school.
- Students in Grades K-8 are expected to be in uniform daily unless it is a uniform holiday, special dress day, or the student receives a uniform pass. Uniform Holiday rules govern attire when uniforms are not worn.
- At all times, students are expected to maintain an age appropriate, tidy, and modest appearance.
- Spirit wear (Hornet logo) is not a permitted part of the school uniform.
- Students must wear shirts/blouses tucked in and buttoned at all times.
- Students must wear uniform compliant belts with shorts or pants in Grades 6-8. Belts are optional for other grades.
- Uniform shorts may be worn during designated dates in the fall and spring. Fall dates are from the beginning of the school year until October 15th. Spring dates are from April 15th until the end of the school year.
- Students must wear socks with shoes. Students may wear leather shoes or tennis shoes with enclosed toes and enclosed heels. High top sneakers worn with socks showing above the shoe are allowed. Students may wear boots to school on rainy or snowy days, but must change into shoes for indoors. Outdoor boots, fashion boots (Hunter, UGGS), cowboy boots, and ankle boots are NOT uniform approved.
- Grooming for all students should be in keeping with each student's age.
- Hair should be neatly groomed.
- Hairstyles should be plain and simple.
- No colored hair (pink, purple, blue, etc.).
- Boys' hair must be cut above the eyebrows, earlobes and shirt collar.
- No face or body makeup.
- Girls may wear nail polish. Polish must be one color on all nails and be without embellishments.
- Jewelry must be small, plain and simple.
 - One pair of earrings less than 1 inch in size. The school suggests not ring hoop style earrings for safety.
 - o One necklace.
 - o One ring per hand.
 - One bracelet per hand.

Attire for Mass

The requirement to "dress consciously" for Mass is based on whether a grade will be celebrating Mass weekly. Students in multi age Grade 1 / 2 through Grade 8 are required to "dress consciously" for Mass as a sign of respect for the sacrament of the Eucharist. Students in Kindergarten and traditional Grade 1, are invited, but not required to "dress consciously" on days when they celebrate Mass. Fleeces may be worn to school on Mass days, but students will be asked to remove them during the celebration of Mass.

Kindergarten and traditional Grade 1: Regular uniform permitted. Students may dress in accordance with the multiage 1 / 2 to 5 requirements to celebrate Mass.

Grades multi age 1/2 to 5: Students may wear fleece to school, but will be encouraged to remove the fleece during the celebration of Mass. Blazers and sweaters are optional items and permitted during Mass.

Girls: must a white blouse or polo to Mass with one of the following skirted items: a plaid 4 pleat skirt or a plaid jumper. For the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years the navy, Lands End skorts will also be permitted.

Boys: must wear the school plaid tie with a short/long sleeve white, button down oxford shirt and navy, twill shorts or pants. Belts remain optional, but are encouraged.

Grades 6 to 8:

Students may wear fleece to school, but will be encouraged to remove the fleece during the celebration of Mass. Blazers and sweaters are optional items and permitted during Mass. Girls: must a white blouse or polo to Mass with one of the following skirted items: a plaid kilt, a plaid 4 pleat skirt or a plaid jumper.

Boys: must wear the school green and gold striped tie with a short/long sleeve white, button down oxford shirt. Boys may choose between either navy or khaki, twill, shorts or pants until 2018-2019, when khaki shorts or pants must be worn. Belts are required at these grade levels.

Uniform Descriptions by Grade Level

Preschool Students

Preschool students do not wear our uniform. Preschool students should follow the Uniform Holiday code in selecting attire for school.

All Students, All Grades K-8

- Short/long sleeve hunter polo (Must have school logo.)
- Short/long sleeve white polo (Permitted, but not required to have school logo) No other logos/branding permitted on white polos. Collars and cuffs should be unisex and not embellished.
- Short/long sleeve white, button down, oxford shirt (Permitted, but not required to have school logo.)
- Navy**, twill shorts or pants. Pants and shorts should be a traditional, dress fit, with pleated or flat fronts. Pants and shorts should fit modestly (in tightness, length, and coverage/rise at the waist) and permit students to run and jump freely. Shorts should be walking or mid-thigh length. Pants should reach the ankles. No jean, cargo, carpenter, parachute, Capri or sweat suit styles. Pants and shorts must be the My Aplus Uniform brand. **Grades 6-8 wear khaki twill shorts and pants.
- Solid color black, navy or white socks. Socks must be ankle, calf or knee style and visible at least 1-2 inches above the shoe line. No logos, branding or words should show above the shoe line. (These may be purchased elsewhere.)
- Black, brown or school plaid belts made from leather or cloth. Belts must be worn with shorts and pants in Grades 6-8 and are optional for all other Grades.

- Brown and black belts may be purchased elsewhere. Large, logo or banded belt buckles are not uniform approved.
- Optional hunter fleece (Must have school logo.)
- Optional hunter sweater (Must have school logo.)
- Optional hunter sweater vest (Must have school logo.)
- Optional navy blazer (Permitted, but not required, to have school logo to allow for non-school use.)

Girls Only Apparel, All Grades K-8:

- Plaid jumper. Jumper must be at least knee length.
- Plaid, 4-pleat skirt. Skirt must be at least knee length.
- White, button down Peter Pan collar blouse
- White, button down ¾ length sleeve blouse
- Navy leggings may be worn. The code for leggings is that they must be worn under a jumper, skirt, skort, or kilt. The leggings must be ankle length. Socks must cover the bottom of the legging. These may be purchased elsewhere.
- White, navy or hunter tights. These may be purchased elsewhere.
- Girls may wear uniform or non-uniform shorts or bicycle shorts under a jumper, skirt, skort or kilt for modesty. Items worn for modesty must not be visible at either the waist or from beneath the hemline of the jumper, skirt, skort or kilt.

Apparel Exclusive to Elementary School, Grades K-5

- Students are permitted to wear any of the All Grades uniform items listed above. In addition.
- Boys must wear the school plaid tie for Mass, but the tie may be worn daily. A white, button down oxford shirt must be worn when wearing the tie.
- Navy, twill shorts and pants will be only worn by students in Grades K-5. These must be the My Aplus Uniform brand.
- Apparel Exclusive to Middle School, Grades 6-8
- Students are permitted to wear any of the All Grades uniform items listed above. In addition,
- Students must wear a brown, black or school plaid belt made of cloth or leather while wearing shorts or pants. Large, logo or banded belt buckles are not uniform approved.
- Khaki, twill shorts and pants will be only worn by Grades 6-8. These must be the My Aplus Uniform brand.
- Boys must wear the school green and gold striped tie for Mass, but the tie may be worn daily. A white, button down oxford shirt must be worn when wearing the tie.
- Girls may wear the plaid kilt. The kilt must be at least knee length.

Uniform Holiday Guidelines

Casual or dress clothing may be worn, but must be appropriate for school. If there is a question as to whether an item of clothing meets the guidelines, please ask in advance or send a compliant alternative with the student to avoid the office contacting a parent or guardian to bring proper attire.

Examples of inappropriate clothing for school includes, but is not limited to:

- No clothing with un-Christian or lewd printed material.
- No shoes without socks.
- No open toes shoes or open heel shoes including, but not limited to: sandals, flip flops, or crocs.
- No boots indoors: fashion, cowboy, or outdoor.
- No skin tight clothing.
- No sleeveless shirts or blouses.
- No halter or tube tops.
- No clothing with a bare midriff.
- No clothing made of a sheer material.
- No sweat pants.
- No torn, ripped, frayed bottom, or cut off shorts, pants, or jeans.
- No writing on the back or seat of shorts or pants.
- No shorts or skorts above mid-thigh length.
- No skirts above knee length.
- No leggings or jeggings worn as the primary lower article of clothing. They may be worn as a layer under skirts, dresses, shorts, or skorts. The leggings must be ankle length. Socks must cover the bottom of the legging.

Uniform Violations

All students and parents/guardians are expected to know and to comply with the Uniform Guidelines without exception. If there is a question as to whether an item of clothing meets the uniform code, please ask in advance or send a compliant alternative with the student to avoid the office contacting a parent or guardian to bring proper attire.

Every attempt will be made to handle uniform violations in a manner that balances the need for justice to all by consistent enforcement of the uniform code with sensitivity to the student's modesty and emotional dignity while addressing the code violation.

Each teacher will be responsible for seeing that his/her students are wearing proper uniforms. Violations will be handled immediately. Violations will be noted and submitted to the school office each morning and afternoon. If a uniform guideline is broken, the student will be given a violation slip. The violation slip must be returned to school with a parent or guardian signature acknowledging the violation. In cases of inappropriate attire, parents or guardians will be contacted to bring proper attire.

General Policies, Guidelines and School Rules

These apply to classrooms, library, church, playground, bus, all parish property, and field trips.

- Parents or guardians will be responsible for all damage done by children for deliberate destruction of school property (i.e. marking of desks, destruction of books, damage to classroom technology equipment, improper lavatory behavior). This will involve either the cleaning up or monetary payment for the article or damaged property.
- No gum chewing or spitting in school, on parish property, or on the bus.

- Students are subject to the authority of all teachers and supervising parents and other adults on field trips, in the gym, the playground, etc. Designated supervisors and their authority are to be respected and obeyed.
- Students are expected to stay off the property of neighbors around the playground and on their way to and from school. All crossing of streets must be done using the proper crosswalks. Bikes must be walked across the streets and on school property.
- Students are only permitted to leave school property during the school hours when they are picked up by a parent or guardian. They must be picked up and signed out in the school office.
- Using vulgar and/or abusive language is forbidden. This includes verbal, written or gestures.
- Students who walk to school should not arrive before 7:45 a.m. No students should be in the building until 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in Chapel at the church by 8:05 a.m. each morning.
- Students are not permitted to bring any electronic equipment including cell phones, video games, DVD or music devices, etc., to school without permission from their teachers. All cell phones, music devices, etc. are to be left in the school office each morning for collection at the end of the school day.
- Throwing stones, sticks, wood chips, snowballs, etc., is strictly forbidden.
- Smoking, drinking, and use or possession of illegal substances, including tobacco, is strictly forbidden on school grounds and busses at all times.
- Students are expected to follow playground and/or indoor rules. Once dismissed from their classrooms, students are to be outside on the playground until the bell rings. They are not allowed in the halls or in classrooms without permission from a teacher or the principal.
- Persistent misbehavior, disrespect, or violation of the rules may result in the removal of the student from the school.
- Respect for teachers and students is conducive to learning in the classroom. Rudeness or any behavior deemed disrespectful will not be tolerated.
- Copying or cheating is considered a serious violation.
- Fighting or wrestling on school grounds is not allowed.
- Students are expected to complete homework following the written school guidelines.

• Violations of school rules will be handled on an individual basis, keeping in mind the severity of the incident, previous actions and personal injury to others.

Absence

Parents are requested to contact the school office by 9 a.m. each day that their child will be absent from school.

It is important that students be in school every day that they are able. Unnecessary absences hurt your child's educational progress. Absences due to a student's illness or death in the family are valid reasons for missing school.

Pupils are expected to make up the work that they miss during an absence. The number of days allowed for this will be equal to the number of days that a pupil is absent unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

When a child is out of school for an extended period of time, arrangements for assignments should be made with the individual classroom teachers to allow teachers sufficient time to prepare the necessary materials.

The school encourages parents to arrange family trips at the scheduled vacation times. Since children are in school one half of the year at most, attendance is crucial in affecting learning. Participation and classroom activities cannot be shared by those not present. Therefore, class grades are affected by attendance. Please notify the teacher when withdrawing a student for a family trip.

When children are absent more than ten days in one marking period, an incomplete may be given if work is not completed.

Tardiness

Parents are responsible to see that their child arrives at school in time for classes. It is imperative that children be at school no later than 8 a.m. in order to begin daily Chapel. Tardiness should be rare.

Students who come to school after 8:05 a.m. must report directly to the office.

- Excused Tardy: Student comes to school late due to attending or serving at morning Mass, a doctor/dentist appointment, a late ride (bus or car) due to extremely hazardous weather conditions, or a bus mechanical problem.
- Unexcused Tardy: Student comes to school late for any reason other than those considered to be excused.

Academic Quality and Integrity Policy

The administration together with the school faculty shall have the responsibility of developing criteria to ensure the integrity of a quality academic program for all students. This shall include, but not be limited to, procedures related to the following:

- 1. Student Retention/Promotion
- 2. Graduation Requirements
- 3. Grading, Assessment, and Reporting

Any student who fails to complete, in a satisfactory way, any portion of the necessary curriculum as determined by the teacher, shall receive an "I" (Incomplete) on the report card.

No student can advance to the next grade level here at Saint Thomas or graduate from St. Thomas until the uncompleted work has been completed in a satisfactory way as determined by the teacher, and the "I" has been removed from the report card.

Any student, who has failed two or more subjects for the year, will be required to complete a summer school program, as determined by the teacher and administration, in order to continue in the next grade level at Saint Thomas or to graduate from Saint Thomas.

Any student who has failed two or more classes during any one semester will prompt a review by the appropriate teachers and administration. The purpose of this review is to determine eligibility for continuing in the next grade at St. Thomas or for graduation from Saint Thomas.

Accidents or Injury

When minor accidents or injuries take place during the school day, the supervisor will fill out a Parent Accident Report. One copy of this will remain at school on file and another copy will be sent home with your child. When a serious accident or injury takes place, parents will be contacted and a more detailed form will be completed for insurance purposes.

Household Census Data Changes

Parents should notify the school office of any change of address, phone number, or household membership changes.

Bicycles

Children may ride bicycles to school as long as the bicycles are operated safely and according to school rules:

- 1. Bicycles must be walked rather than ridden on the school grounds.
- 2. Bicycles must be locked while kept at the school's bicycle racks.

Boots

Many classrooms are carpeted. During the wet, muddy, snowy weather, children should wear boots. If boots are not shoe boots, an extra pair of regular shoes must be kept at school.

Communications

Communications with teachers or students during the school day are made through the school office so that classroom activities are not disturbed. Important messages will be conveyed through the school office to teachers and students.

It is important that students come prepared to school. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/s to see that the child has all assignments, books, and materials necessary on a daily basis. Students are not to use the telephone to make after school plans.

There are times when students stay after school for various reasons (discipline; extra help; help teacher). Parents will be informed the day prior as to the reason and length of time that the child will stay, unless teachers can make appropriate arrangements for that day.

Often parents' schedules change due to work or personal circumstances. It is vital that parents contact the office with new information that will allow the school to contact the parent in an emergency. Any change of address or phone information must be conveyed to the office as soon as possible. If necessary, teachers are available to meet with parents between 3:15 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. each school day. Please request the meeting with your child's teacher ahead of time to arrange a conference.

The weekly BUZZ newsletter is provided for your information. E-mail, Remind, website messages, and Infinite Campus communications will be our major means of communication. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school informed of e-mail address changes. Monthly Education Commission approved minutes are placed on the website for your information.

All newsletters/fliers/letters must have the approval of the school office before being disseminated to students. Any parent or group wishing to have something distributed to students must bring it to the school office for approval. Approved items will be placed in teacher mailboxes for their distribution.

There are times when family situations or circumstances are troubling to a student. Parents should be conscious that this can and often does affect a student's performance both in academics and behavior. Please keep teachers informed by sharing with them the situation (in confidence), so that they can help your child through any difficult times.

There may be times when differences of opinion occur between parents and teachers. When this happens, the matter should first be dealt with in a special conference between the parent and the teacher. The principal will meet with the parent only after a prior parent-teacher conference has taken place and the difference has not been resolved satisfactorily. Should the parent be dissatisfied with the action taken by the principal, please consult the Parent Communication/Problem Solving Process and Grievance Procedure sections.

Diocese of Grand Rapids Office of Catholic Schools

(Adapted with permission from the Archdiocese of Detroit)

Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School Electronic Information Access and Acceptable Use of School Systems

Purpose

Saint Thomas the Apostle (the "School") encourages and strongly promotes the use of electronic information technologies in educational endeavors. The School provides access to electronic information resources in a variety of formats, and for the development of information management skills. Together these allow learners to access current and relevant resources provide the opportunity to communicate in a technologically rich environment and assist them in becoming responsible, self-directed, lifelong learners.

The School has developed this Electronic Information Access and Acceptable Use of School Systems policy (this "Policy") to govern the access, use and security of School Systems (defined below). Every User (defined below) must read, sign and abide by this Policy.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following capitalized terms have the meanings ascribed to them below. Additional capitalized terms are defined within this Policy.

- (a) "PEDs" means portable electronic devices, including, without limitation, laptop computers, cellular telephones, pocket personal computers, handheld computers, cameras, video recorders, sound recording devices and all forms of portable electronic devices.
- (b) "School Confidential Information" means all confidential and/or proprietary information and materials of the School, its faculty, administrators, students, employees and/or third parties with which the School does business.
- (c) "School Electronic Information" means all electronic information (including the School Confidential Information), communications or activity created, sent, received, stored and/or otherwise used on behalf of the School, whether or not the School Systems are used to create, send, receive, store or otherwise use that information or those communications. The School Electronic Information includes voicemail messages on the School Equipment.
- (d) "School Equipment" means any and all electronic devices owned, leased or operated by or for the benefit of the School, which have the capability of creating, sending, receiving, storing and/or otherwise using electronic information, materials and/or communications, including, but not limited to, pagers, computers, servers, disk drives, scanners, photocopiers, printers, fax machines, telephones and PEDs. School Equipment includes all operating software, application software and firmware owned and/or licensed by the School, which resides and/or is embedded in any the School Equipment.
- (e) "School Networks" means all School voice and data systems, including, without limitation, the School's Internet, intranet and extranet systems.
- (f) "School Systems" means the School Equipment and the School Networks.
- (g) "Users" means any individual who accesses and/or uses School Systems, including, without limitation:
 - (i) School full time, part-time and temporary faculty and/or employees;
 - (ii) School third party contractors, vendors, consultants, representatives and agents, as well as their full time, part-time and temporary employees; and

- (iii) Parents, students and volunteers.
- (h) "User Equipment" means electronic devices that are continuously or intermittently connected to School Systems, or a component thereof, which are not owned or leased by the School, including, without limitation, User-owned computers, pagers, telephones, fax machines and PEDs. User Equipment without connectivity to School Systems does not fall under the purview of this Policy.

Application

This Policy applies to all Users and to all School Systems, User Equipment, School Confidential Information and School Electronic Information.

To the extent this Policy applies to School faculty and/or employees, this Policy supplements, but does not replace, the School's [policies/handbook/manual]. The terms of this Policy will govern any conflict or inconsistencies with the terms of such [policies/ handbook/manual]. Any School faculty and/or employee who violate this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

To the extent this Policy applies to students, this Policy supplements, but does not replace, the School's [policies/rules/handbook]. The terms of this Policy will govern any conflict or inconsistencies with the terms of such [policies/rules/handbook]. Any student who violates this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. To the extent this Policy applies to third parties, this Policy supplements, but does not replace, School's agreements with such third parties. The terms of this Policy will govern any conflict or inconsistencies with the terms of such agreements. Third parties who violate this Policy may no longer be considered eligible for access to and/or use of School Systems, School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information. A third party's violation of this Policy shall also be considered a material breach of its agreement with School, entitling School to terminate such agreement for cause.

The School Systems, School Confidential Information and School Electronic Information are the School's property and may be used solely for educational purposes and/or the School's operational activities. Each User must take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorized access to or use of School Confidential Information and School Electronic Information. Unless otherwise directed by School, or permitted or required by this Policy, Users may not:

- (a) take, retain or use School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information for User's own benefit;
- (b)disclose School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information to any other entity or unauthorized person without the written permission from a School officer; (c) delete, encrypt, password protect, or retain electronic files containing School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information (including emails and attachments); or
- (d) take any other action that impairs, restricts, limits, or impedes School's ability to have full access to and use of its School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information. Upon request, User shall return to School all School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information, and otherwise fully cooperate with and assist School in ensuring School's ability to have full access to and use of School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information. Such cooperation and assistance may include, but is not limited to, removing any password protection, encryption or other proprietary format on School Confidential Information and/or School Electronic Information. The School retains the right to search, monitor, access and/or review all School Systems, School Electronic Information and all other electronic and voice mail communications,

computer files, databases and any other electronic transmissions contained in or accessed by School Systems, at any time, with or without notice, at School's sole discretion. This may include, without limitation:

- (a) viewing, printing, downloading and/or listening to emails and voicemails created, sent, received, stored and/or otherwise used in or through School Systems;
- (b) viewing, modifying and/or removing a User's electronic mailbox; and/or reviewing audit trails created by School Systems. No email, voicemail or other information, whether received, sent, stored or used on or through School Systems, is private. Users have no expectation that any information contained on any School Systems is confidential or private to them. The School's System is not a public forum and access to the technology is a privilege and not a right. By using School Systems, Users consent to the access and disclosure of email messages, voicemail messages and other information within School's organization without restrictions, but subject to School's legal and contractual obligations of confidentiality. Users should not use School Systems to create, send, receive and/or store information that is personal if it is confidential or sensitive, since such personal information will be considered School Electronic Information if created, sent, received and/or stored using School Systems.

The School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for any reason regarding the access to, or use, quality or availability of, School Systems, including but not limited to the loss of data. All School Systems are provided on an "as is, as available" basis.

School Responsibility

Internet Safety Provisions

The School will designate a system administrator who will manage the School Systems and make the final determination as to what is inappropriate use based on this Policy. The system administrator will designate a back-up system administrator in the event that the system administrator is not available. The system administrator or the back-up system administrator may close an account at any time for infractions or temporarily remove a User account and/or a User's access to or use of the School Systems for any reason, including, without limitation, to prevent unauthorized activity. The School will implement filtering software intended to block access to materials that are obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors, or that the School determines to be inappropriate for minors. However, the School does not guarantee that it will be able to fully prevent any User's access to such materials, or that Users will not have access to such materials while using School Systems. The filtering software will operate on all School Equipment which have Internet access while at school or outside of the School's Networks and on all User Equipment within the School wide area network (WAN) or local area network (LAN).

Subject to system administrator approval and staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

The School does not take responsibility for resources located or actions taken by any Users that do not support the purposes of the School.

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the School staff to supervise and monitor usage of the School Network and access to the Internet in accordance with this Policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act.

The school will implement education about online safety and appropriate online behavior. This education includes, but is not limited to, interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Saint Thomas the Apostle Network Users

Users will be granted access to appropriate services offered by the School Network. In addition, the following people may become account holders or members of the School Network:

- 1. Students. Students who are currently enrolled in the School will be granted a School Network account upon agreement to the terms stated in this Policy.
- 2. Faculty and Staff. Staff members currently employed by the School will be granted a School Network account upon agreement to the terms stated in this Policy.
- 3. Others. Anyone may request a special account on or use of the School Network. These requests will be granted on a case-by-case basis, depending on need and resource availability.

Privileges and Responsibilities of Users Privileges

Subject to the terms of this Policy, Users have the privilege to:

- use all authorized School Systems for which they have received training to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- access information from outside resources which facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.
- access School Networks and the Internet to retrieve information to facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange.

User Responsibilities

Users are responsible for:

- · using School Systems only for facilitating learning, appropriate personal growth and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of the School.
- · attending appropriate training sessions in the use and care of School Systems.
- · seeking instruction for the use of any available technology with which they are not familiar.
- · adhering to the rules established for the use of School Systems, in the School or through remote access outside of the School.
- · refraining from disclosing, using or disseminating personal identification information regarding students over the Internet without parent or guardian authorization.
- · maintaining the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords. School Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purposes. students may use e-mail, chat, instant messaging, and other forms of two-way electronic communications only for educational purposes and only under the direct supervision of an adult.
- · having all electronic media scanned for virus, dirt, damage or other contamination which might endanger the integrity of School Systems before they are used in School Systems.
- · material received, created or distributed using School Systems.
- · maintaining the integrity of the electronic messaging system (voice, e-mail, etc.), deleting files or messages if they have exceeded their established limit, reporting any violations of privacy and

making only those contacts which facilitate learning and enhance educational information exchange. If a User remains in noncompliance, the system administrator may delete files and messages, freeze the account, and/or close the account.

- preventing material considered pornographic by the School, inappropriate files or files dangerous to the integrity of the School's Systems from entering the School via the Internet or from being reproduced in visual, digital or written format.
- awareness of and adhering to copyright laws and guidelines and trademark laws and applicable licensing agreements in the use of School Systems and in the transmission or copying of text or files on the Internet or from other resources. Users must also comply with all other applicable laws, both state and federal, with respect to their use of the School's Systems.
- using caution (*Buyer Beware*) when considering the purchase of goods or services over the Internet. The School is not liable for any financial obligations made nor any personal information provided while using School Systems.
- financial restitution for unauthorized costs incurred or damages or repair necessitated by inappropriate use or access.
- any damages to, or incurred on, User Equipment. Users accessing School Systems on User Equipment do so at their own risk.
- abiding by the rules set forth in this Policy, general School rules, and additional rules as may be established by the School. Local School Committee policies, staff manuals, departmental procedures, and student handbooks may include such rules.

Users are prohibited from:

- using the technology for a "for-profit" business, for product advertisement or political lobbying.
- the malicious use of technology to disrupt the use of technology by others, to harass or discriminate against others or to infiltrate computer systems or files without proper permission and authorization (hacking).
- accessing, using, disclosing or disseminating personal identification information about minors.
- using School Systems to draft, send, or receive inappropriate communications and material including but not limited to, items which might be considered as pornographic, obscene, profane, vulgar, harassing, threatening, defamatory, and bullying or are prohibited by law.
- participating in hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial/bullying behaviors on the network.
- vandalizing School Systems or any other information technologies (the School's or any
 others). Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm, destroy, or disrupt or hack the
 operation of the School's Systems. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the creation or
 intentional receipt or transmission of computer viruses.
- allowing those not deemed as staff or volunteers access to devices distributed for the express purpose of performing school administrative or instructional duties, i.e. non-designated users are not allowed access to
- School Systems that contain or may contain School Confidential Information or information
 proprietary to the function of the assigned user's duties. Additionally, non-designated users
 shall not have access to School Equipment that was provided for the exclusive use of Staff
 and/or Volunteers required to perform their designated duties.

Declaration (this page is to be signed and returned to the Technology Coordinator)
The School has developed this Policy for all Users and it applies to all School Systems, User Equipment, School Confidential Information and School Electronic Information. Access and use of School Systems is a privilege for each User.

I have read, understand and will abide by this Policy. I agree to be responsible for and abide by this Policy and all other rules, regulations, policies and/or procedures related to School Systems. I understand that should I commit any violation, my privileges and/or account may be revoked, and that disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

I understand and acknowledge that I might locate material that could be considered offensive or controversial, that parents of minors should be aware of the existence of such materials and monitor home usage of School Systems, and that students knowingly bringing or downloading such material into the School environment will be dealt with according to the discipline policies of the School. In consideration for the privilege of using the School Systems and in consideration for having access to the information contained or accessed on it, I hereby release the School and its operators and sponsors, its faculty and staff and all organizations, groups and institutions with which the School is affiliated for any and all claims of any nature arising from my use, my child's use or inability to use, the School Systems.

User's Signature: Print User's Name:

Date

(If you are under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also read and sign this Policy)

As the parent or guardian of this minor, I have read this Policy and understand that this access is designed for legitimate educational purposes. The School has taken precautions to prohibit access to inappropriate materials. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the School to restrict access to all inappropriate or copyrighted materials and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on or through the School Systems or any consequences of such acquisition of materials. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use of any School Systems is not in a school setting.

Users are responsible for attending appropriate training sessions in the use and care of all School Systems and should refrain from using any technology for which they have not received training. Users may be required to make full financial restitution for any damages to School Systems or unauthorized expenses incurred through the use of School Systems.

As the lawfully authorized parent or guardian of the minor identified above, I hereby give permission to issue a membership account to this individual.

Parent/Guardian Signature: Print Parent/Guardian Name: Date: